

# Kyodan

## News Letter

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN JAPAN  
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No. 52

March 20, 1971

### FRIENDS:

After the resignation of Moderator Kiyoshi Ii, upon whom had been laid representative responsibility for the present distressing situation in our Kyodan, the succession to the moderatorship unexpectedly fell to me. Since I have shared responsibility with Moderator Ii since February, 1970, it is unthinkable, morally and because of my personal feelings, that I should succeed to this position. It is apparent, however, that we must proceed and it is my sincere desire to press forward, following the continuing earnest endeavors of Moderator Ii.

It is my sincere hope that you will cooperate with us and pray for the Kyodan that she may find the right way out of our present agony.

March, 1971

*Mitsuho Yoshida*

Mitsuho Yoshida, Moderator  
The United Church of Christ in Japan

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Elected to succeed Rev. Mitsuho Yoshida as Gicho-hosa (assistant to the moderator) is Rev. Kichiya Kikuchi of Tokyo.

Mr. Kikuchi was born at Hirosaki, Aomori Prefecture, in 1913. He was graduated from the Theological School of Aoyama Gakuin in 1940. He served pastorates in Hokkaido, Yokohama and Aomori prefecture before going to Shitaya Church, located near Tokyo's Ueno Station, where he now serves. He is at present chairman of the Kyodan's Commission on Mission and served previously as head of the evangelism committee. He is the author of several books and is a proponent of the parish evangelism movement in the Kyodan.

In accepting his new responsibilities, Kikuchi said, "I know I'm not a church politician nor administrator; rather, in the old Methodist tradition, I feel that I'm an evangelist at heart. Nevertheless, I'll try to assist Moderator Yoshida in any way that I can."

### The Least Coin Fund

Seirei-en Nursing Home for the Elderly in Hiroshima has been the recipient of an offering of \$2,000 from the Least Coin Fund, for which it is deeply grateful. The Fund is given by women of many denominations and churches on World Day of Prayer, observed annually during Lent.





### Pastor, Poet, Pascal Scholar

"I love everything Japanese." The sleeve of the black kimono swung out to suggest the breadth of the speaker's enjoyment of tea ceremony, Japanese songs, art, everything Japanese.

Yet the man speaking was also the person who, through his translations, has introduced into Japan the writings of the French philosopher Pascal, the words of Handel's "Messiah," Gregorian chants, Christmas carols, many English hymns, and even the works of Stephen Foster. His own hymns have been translated into English and published abroad.

Rev. Koh Yuki, this man of diverse talents, is pastor of the Higashi Nakano Church in Tokyo. In the study of the Yuki home on the outskirts of Tokyo, he recently discussed the interplay between the pastorate, literature, music and art in his life. The neatly sculptured pines and the irregularly set stepping stones in the small garden in front of the frame house suggest the beauty that Yuki so loves. The walls of his study are lined with books, both copies of his own writings and volumes that have nurtured him over the years. Pictures, including a sketch of Yuki done by Tadao Tanaka, suggest the range of his interests and friendship.

"I wrote my first songs when I was fifteen," he said, tracing his long involvement in hymnology to its start. Yuki's father was an independent evangelist, and his son grew up in the atmosphere of cottage prayer meetings, Sunday school and camps, learning to play the organ by himself.

Yuki attended Kwansei Gakuin University. In a booklet published on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of Higashi Nakano Church in 1970, Yuki tells how he was strongly pulled toward a career in literature, music or the arts but chose instead to follow in his father's footsteps as a pastor. He attended the Japan Evangelistic Band Seminary in Kobe, then was invited to serve the Futaba Church in Tokyo, an independent congregation that came into the United Church when it was formed in 1941 and eventually became the Higashi Nakano Church.

#### In a Lowly Manger Born

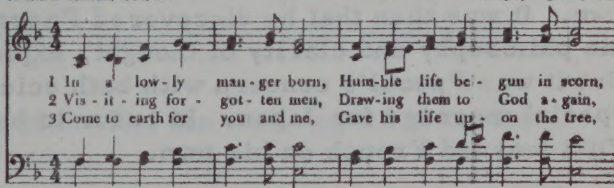
Mabune no naka ni

K3 YBN, 1923

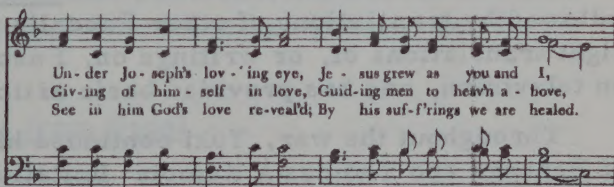
Fr. Arthur Gamblin, 1939, alt.

MABUNE 77, 77, D.

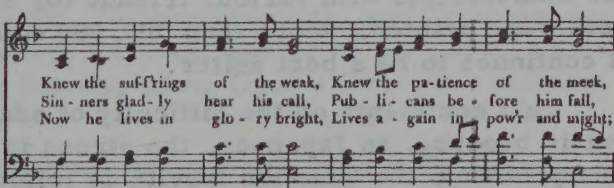
Melody by Seigi Abe, 1930



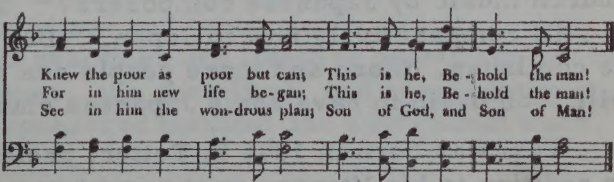
1 In a low-ly man-ger born, Hum-ble life be- gun in scorn,  
2 Vis- it - ing for - got - ten men, Draw-ing them to God a - gain,  
3 Come to earth for you and me, Gave his life up - on the tree,



Un - der Jo - seph's lov - ing eye, Je - sus grew as you and I,  
Giv - ing of him - self in love, Guid - ing men to heav'n a - bove,  
See in him God's love re - veal'd; By his suf - f'ings we are healed.



Knew the suf - f'ings of the weak, Knew the pa - tience of the meek,  
Sin - ners glad - ly hear his call, Pub - li - cans be - fore him fall,  
Now he lives in glo - ry bright, Lives a - gain in pow'r and might;



Knew the poor as poor but can; This is he, Be - hold the man!  
For in him new life be - gan; This is he, Be - hold the man!  
See in him the won - drous plan; Son of God, and Son of Man!

John 19:5; Luke 2:7; Heb. 4:15

Hymns of the Church



"I moved from hymn writing to liturgy," says Yuki, who is also a writer of waka, a form of Japanese poetry. Ten lyrics by Yuki and more than seventy of his translations are found in the present hymnal, published in 1955. His lyrics and translations are also included in a collection of religious and folk music prepared for popular use, and in the Kyodan's children's song book. He has served as a member and as chairman of various hymnal editorial committees.

In 1961 Yuki's Reihaigaku gairon (An Introduction to Liturgics) was published, a book that was then ahead of its time. Yuki notes with enthusiasm that today liturgy is of great interest to young pastors. An ecumenical research group in Worship that meets monthly at Higashi Nakano Church has studied contemporary folk masses, jazz worship services, drama, and architecture, as well as the liturgies of Orthodox, Catholic, Lutheran and other Protestant churches.

What does Yuki think of modern forms of church worship? He feels that "the church must try them." "What is good will last, what is bad will not remain," he says. "I myself like the modern. The words to Mabune are modern. So is the architecture of Higashi Nakano Church." In the new sanctuary, completed in 1965, angular forms, in concrete, metal, glass and light and dark woods, dominate.

It was Yuki's belief that Pascal "has a message for modern Japanese" that led to his determination to translate Pascal's works. In the 30s Yuki had been searching the Christian classics for the Christian position with regard to Marxism. It was then that he discovered Pascal. He was immediately impressed by his philosophy and clarity of thought, explaining, "He was a poet, you know." But it was Pascal's concern with both science and religion that Yuki felt held a special message for Japan. In order to be able to translate Pascal's writings, Yuki learned French on his own.

His translations of sections from Pensees was published first in 1938, followed by translations of other Pascal's works. He has produced a total of eight translations of, or writings on, Pascal, has lectured in universities and on television, and has provided basic articles for major reference books.

Throughout the war, Yuki continued his translation of the complete edition of Pensees and Thomas 'a Kempis' Imitation of Christ, depositing sections of his manuscripts with various friends for safe-keeping, until after the war when both were printed. More than 300,000 copies of Pensees have been sold, and it continues to be a best seller.

Yuki comments on the difficulty of adapting Japanese words to Western music because, in Japanese, the stress is on pitch rather than accent. Given this problem, the question inevitably follows, "Why hasn't there been more church music by Japanese composers?" Yuki says it is because Christianity is still comparatively new to Japan. "But we are beginning to understand," he continues. More and more people are studying church music. "I think we will soon begin to have some Japanese church music. From now on...."

Yuki was born in 1896 in Tottori prefecture. At 75, he is still very active. In addition to his literary works and hymns, he has written a number of books on the Christian life, including studies of Ephesians, I Peter and Romans.



### The Research Arm of Mission

Since the restructuring of the Kyodan in April, 1969, and especially since the Kyodan's move to the new Christian Center last November, the Research Institute on Mission (senkyo kenkyu sho, informally, senken) has assumed an increasingly important role in the life of the Kyodan.

Under the new setup, the senken's function and role have been widened. Centering in specific research and study programs, there are, on one hand, hundreds of pieces of material flowing into the office from inside and outside Japan, to be collected, clipped and filed. On the other hand, there are information services to be performed, closely related, physically as well as functionally, to the Information (Koho) Center. (see Kyodan News Letter No. 47)

Recent and pending research and study programs and projects include:

- \* Study Conference on Christianity and Marxism (KNL No. 46)
- \* Joint Study Seminar with Social Concerns Committee on "Church and State" (KNL No. 46)
- \* Research on the Kyodan's Policy on Ministerial Training
- \* Study of Childhood Education (nurseries and kindergartens) in the church, meaning and missionary implication
- \* Study on civil disobedience and its implications in the context of the Christian faith
- \* Study of the missionary policy of the Kyodan with regard to future cooperation with churches abroad

The Kyodan Research Institute welcomes materials from other churches dealing with these or other projects being undertaken by similar church research agencies.

### Visitors from Nepal

On March 16, two interesting visitors paid their respects to Kyodan General Secretary Toru Takakura. They were Dr. Noboru Iwamura, widely known medical missionary to Nepal, and Rev. Robert Karthak, pastor of the Nepali Christian Church in Katmandu, who was on his way home from a five-week mission in the U.S.

Nepal, with its population of 12 million, has a small, active Protestant Church of around 800 members, most of whom were converted to Christianity outside the country, since direct evangelism and baptism are strictly forbidden. Those who are convicted of such practices are liable to prison sentences. Worship services for believers, however, are permitted, and congregational life goes on, as does united mission sponsored medical and educational work.

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CORRECTION: The subscription price for the KYODAN NEWS LETTER inside Japan is ¥500, not ¥800, as was erroneously stated in the last issue of the News Letter.



what has been ---- I N T H E K Y O D A N ---- what is to be

## I. Coming Events

CCC Annual Spring Meeting to discuss changes in structure, 4/16

## II. Education

Keiwa High School graduates first class of 86 students (Shimbun 3/13)

Pearle McCain receives Fifth Class Order of the Sacred Treasure for contributions to education in Japan

### Kyodan

Executive Committee elects Kikuchi as gicho-hosa (assistant to the moderator) (Shimpo 2/27, Shimbun 2/27)

Executive Committee adopts reduced budget of ¥94.1 million for 1971 fiscal year, with increases in pensions for retired pastors and salaries of office and staff personnel, decreases in mission and office space expense, 2/18 (Shimpo 3/1)

Standing Executive Committee meets March 1 and discusses ministerial examination problem (Shimpo 3/13, Tsushin 3/2)

Standing Executive Committee meets with resigned Committee on Ministerial Qualifications members (Shimpo 3/13)

### Mission

Mission Study Committees of four districts of West Japan meet 2/15 in Kurashiki (Shimpo 3/6)

Commission on Mission approves ¥5.9 million budget for 1971 (down ¥5.6 from 1970), debates evaluation of 10-year evangelism plan, discusses convening mission planning conference sometime before March 1972 (Shimpo 3/20)

WCC Wieser visits Japan, discusses "Salvation Today" theme with NCC Department of Mission (Tsushin 3/10)

Missionary Personnel Committee circulates proposed new policy on missionaries

### Overseas

Executive Secretary for Ecumenical Ministries Hanabusa attends Asian Minority meeting in U.S., visits U.S. congregations served by pastors of Japanese descent 3/1-19

Kyodan hears reports of 7 persons sent to Methodist Consultation on Missionary Service in Asia today at Kuala Lumpur 2/18-23

### Publication

Kyodan Board of Publication publishes Shishido's Asia and Japan in the 70s (Shimpo 3/20)

### Social

NCC Committee on Minority Problems issues protest on immigration bill to Diet (Shimbun 3/20)

Anti-Yasukuni activity continues; Okayama Christian Association conducts 30-hour hunger strike Feb.28-March 1 in opposition to Yasakuni shrine nationalization (Shimpo 3/20)

### TUTS

Tokyo Union Theological Seminary graduates 10 students March 5 (Shimbun 3/13)

### YOUTH

Independent national youth union sponsors seminar 3/25-27 (Shimbun 3/13)

Shimpo=Kyodan weekly / Shimbun=Kirisuto Shimbun weekly / Tsushin=Christian daily  
News Letter=English monthly